

EPA Risk Management Program Deadline Approaches - June 20, 1999

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Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) Amendments of 1990 requires EPA to publish regulations focusing on the prevention of chemical accidents. These new regulations build on both the chemical safety work begun under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), and the Process Safety Management regulations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). EPCRA helps local communities prepare for and respond to chemical accidents by requiring facilities to communicate their plans to the surrounding public.

An estimated 64,000 facilities, a few of which are DOE sites, are subject to the RMP Rule based on the quantity of regulated substances they have onsite. Chemical facilities are required to implement a Risk Management Program and submit a summary of the program to an EPA specified central location by June 20, 1999. This submission will be required electronically through RMP*Submit. This system will help avoid common reporting errors. RMP*Submit will be available in early 1999 and is free-of-charge through the National Center for environmental Publications and Information (NCEPI) at:

- Phone: 800-490-9198
- Fax: 513-489-8695
- Home page: www.epa.gov/ncepihom

You can also download the RMP*Submit from EPA's Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (CEPPO) Homepage.

At a recent meeting of the Center for Chemical Process Safety Technical Steering Committee in New Orleans, chemical industry representatives shared some of their experiences and lessons learned while communicating their RMPs. These include:

- Visible community support during the rollout, including a credible third party, can make all the difference.
- Activists are ready and organized. National environmental groups are aware of the RMP activities underway in many communities.
- Targeted presentations to key community groups may be more effective than large public events.
- Be ready to answer questions that go beyond the scope of RMP. Your audience may be interested in other aspects of your environmental programs.